

---

## Meeting Notes

---

Staff Listening Session

October 25, 2010

4-6 p.m.

DCPS Central Office

---

### Overview:

This meeting was convened to gain the input of school-based staff in the DCPS community on how to make our schools safe, inclusive and welcoming learning environments for all. The input gathered will contribute to the development of a comprehensive plan for supporting the DCPS LGBTQ community of students, staff and families. A newly formed LGBTQ Steering Committee of students, school administration and staff, parents and community experts is guiding the Central Office staff in the development and implementation of this plan.

**Attendance:** four students, four central office staff, two school administrators, six school-based staff

### Notes:

Issue	Comments
Introductions and Purpose	The DCPS Central Office is developing a comprehensive plan for supporting the DCPS LGBTQ community of students, staff and families. The purpose of this meeting was to gain insight into what would help make schools safer and more welcoming using very specific and nurturing ways to support LGBTQ students; and to discover what is the current landscape in our schools now, current supports in place, what are the gaps, and the best way to move forward with a specific action plan.
Culture in our Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Goal is an intentional school culture that is welcoming, positive, safe, orderly with mention of the DCPS philosophy guided discipline approach</li><li>• Good: is a culture of tolerance, adults and teachers are open, Gay-Straight Alliance just started, 6<sup>th</sup> grader came out safely</li><li>• Change: GSA mission and information not presented and expressed school-wide, students still fearful of coming out, people don't pay attention if they don't think it affects them directly, still witnessing bullying, want a safe space</li><li>• Simple and clear interpretations of policies for school community</li><li>• Programs needed to support –in addition to LGBTQ students- families and GSA; programs to address internet and communications bullying, safe space programming</li><li>• Trainings- workshops for parents, staff, any adult in the building</li><li>• Outside support-list of resources</li></ul>

Current Supports for our Schools	core beliefs, strong public policies, student behavior supports, risk reduction/health promotion supports, role of parents, community resources
Gaps and Next Steps	<p>praise for those who speak out (empower the bystander), how to self-identify and self-advocate, consistency in behavior of adults, addressing slang, bullying by LGBTQ gangs, sensitivity training and empathy building, impact of peers is a very powerful force, train adults that do the advisory, take the lead from students</p> <p>Making a concrete plan to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to gain principal input</li> <li>• Creative ways to reach students (student helpline, famous person)</li> <li>• Making school community aware of resources (organizations, programs)</li> <li>• Safe space training at all the schools</li> <li>• How to start a GSA</li> <li>• Empower the bystander programming</li> <li>• Ally training</li> <li>• Next meeting?</li> </ul> <p>This listening session data will be presented at the first meeting of the LGBTQ Steering Committee on for incorporation into the overall plan.</p> <p>For more information contact Andrea DeSantis, Risk Reduction Coordinator, at <a href="mailto:andrea.desantis@dc.gov">andrea.desantis@dc.gov</a> or 202.442.5040.</p>